

VZCZCXYZ0008
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHAK #2151/01 3571407
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 221407Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO RUEADWD/HQDA WASHDC PRIORITY
RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8279
RUEILB/NCTC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
INFO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 0070
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 5137
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC//J-3/J-5//
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RUEHAK/TSR ANKARA TU
RUEHAK/USDAO ANKARA TU

UNCLAS ANKARA 002151

S/CT FOR RHONDA SHORE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [TU](#)
SUBJECT: TURKEY: 2008 COUNTRY REPORTS ON TERRORISM
REF: STATE 120019

1. Domestic and transnational terrorist groups have targeted Turkish nationals and foreigners in Turkey, including, on occasion, USG personnel, for more than 40 years. Terrorist groups that operated in Turkey have included Kurdish separatist, Marxist-Leninist, radical Islamist, and pro-Chechen groups. Terrorism in Turkey is defined in the Anti-Terror Law #3713 (TMK, 1991). "Terrorist" activities are composed primarily of crimes outlined in the Penal Code committed within the context of terrorist group activities, which target the structure of the state, changing or destroying the principles of the state, and aiming to create panic and terror in society. Thus, Turkish law defines terrorism as attacks against Turkish citizens and the Turkish state, and hampers Turkey's ability to interdict those who would target non-combatants globally. This, and the government's focus on the PKK, present the major challenges for enhanced terrorist cooperation.

2. Most prominent among terrorist groups in Turkey is the Kongra-Gel/Kurdistan Worker's Party (KGK/PKK). Composed primarily of Kurds with a separatist agenda, the KGK/PKK operated from bases in northern Iraq and directed its forces to target mainly Turkish security forces. In 2006, 2007, and 2008, KGK/PKK violence claimed hundreds of Turkish lives. The Kurdistan Freedom Falcons (TAK), a group designated under E.O. 13224, is affiliated with the KGK/PKK and has claimed responsibility for a series of deadly attacks on Turkish and foreign citizens in Turkish cities in recent years. On 19 February 2008, TAK announced it would engage in a renewed campaign of violence in Turkey. Both TAK and PKK claimed responsibility for a car bomb on 19 August at a Mersin police checkpoint and for a 23 August car bomb in a residential area of Izmir. PKK also claimed responsibility for a car bomb in Diyarbakir on 3 January, which killed six civilians and wounded 70; it apologized for this attack, claiming that the attackers were PKK members acting independently of orders.

3. In the midst of weeks of violence, during which KGK/PKK attacks claimed scores of killed or wounded Turkish soldiers and citizens, the Turkish parliament on October 17, 2007, overwhelmingly passed a motion authorizing cross-border military operations against KGK/PKK targets in northern Iraq. Turkish forces carried out extensive operations along the

Turkey-Iraq border in the latter part of the year. On November 5th, President Bush committed to provide Turkey "real-time, actionable intelligence" to counter the KGK/PKK in northern Iraq. Throughout 2008, Turkey continued to carry out strikes along the Turkey-Iraq border with increasing frequency. In February, the Turks launched ground operations into northern Iraq, targeting PKK locations, and then disengaging by the end of the month. The Turkish government claims that during 2008, 657 PKK members were killed, 161 were captured, and 161 surrendered in skirmishes. In addition, 120 PKK members turned themselves over to Turkish authorities under the terms of a repentance law passed in 2005.

¶4. Other prominent terrorist groups in Turkey included the Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C), a militant Marxist-Leninist group with anti-U.S. and anti-NATO views that seeks the violent overthrow of the Turkish state; and Turkish Hizballah (not affiliated with Lebanese Hizballah), an organization of Sunni Kurds with a violent history. The Great Eastern Islamic Raiders Front (IBDA-C) is a decentralized Islamic revivalist group that was particularly active in the 1990s; it claimed ties with al-Qaida. A previously unknown terrorist organization, Revolutionary Headquarters (Devrimci Karargah), an apparently Marxist organization espousing an anti-imperialist, anti-Zionist agenda, conducted two attacks in Istanbul in 2008, against political and military targets. News Reports claim that this organization has merged with the remains of a formerly active and bloody organization, DEV-SOL (Revolutionary Left).

¶5. Investigations into an organization named Ergenekon, allegedly composed of former military officials, bureaucrats, politicians, journalists, and underworld figures, began in 2007, leading to arrests in the summer of 2008. Alleged members of Ergenekon are on trial for a number of crimes including terrorism charges. The details of the case are murky, however, and Ergenekon's status as a terrorist organization is under debate.

¶6. Islamic radicals continue to target US and foreign personnel in Turkey. On 9 July 2008, four gunmen attacked the US consulate in Istanbul, killing three police officers. The Turkish government arrested four alleged compatriots of the attackers in the following days and claims that the gunmen were affiliated with Al-Qaida. Earlier in the year, the Turkish National Police (TNP) and the National Intelligence Organization (MIT) conducted a successful series of raids against suspected Al-Qaida affiliated terrorists. In January, police raids in Gaziantep against an alleged al-Qaida cell ended in firefights, leading to the deaths of four suspects and the arrests of another 18. Follow-on raids in April led to the detention of an additional 35 people; 24 were indicted. In mid-December, the Turks arrested another 60 suspected al-Qaida members in Istanbul, Izmir, and Manisa.

¶7. Turkey has consistently supported Coalition efforts in Afghanistan. After commanding International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) II in 2002 and ISAF VII in 2005, Turkey led the joint rotational command of the ISAF in Afghanistan for the Capital Regional Command from April to December 2007. Turkey is fielding a civilian Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Wardak Province. It has also undertaken training of Afghan police officials, politicians, and bureaucrats in Turkey.

¶8. Turkey has provided significant logistical support to Coalition operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, authorizing the use of Incirlik Air Base as an air-refueling hub for OEF and OIF and as a cargo hub to transport non-lethal cargo to U.S. troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. Almost 60 percent of air cargo for U.S. troops in Iraq transits Incirlik. Establishment of this hub allows six C-17 aircraft to transport the amount of goods it took nine to ten aircraft to move from Germany, and saves the United States almost \$160 million per year. Between one-third and two-thirds of the fuel destined for the Iraqi people and more than 25 percent

of fuel for Coalition Forces transits from Turkey into Iraq via the Habur Gate border crossing. Turkey was active in reconstruction efforts, including providing electricity to Iraq. Turkey contributed headquarters personnel to the NATO Training Mission in Iraq (NTM-I) and completed military leadership training in Turkey for 89 Iraqi officers as a further contribution to the NATO NTM-I.

¶9. The Turkish government has proposed a number of reforms to its counterterrorism and intelligence structure. The reform proposals predate 2008, but were given a sharper focus following a PKK attack in October against a military outpost at Aktutun in southeastern Turkey. The proposals are still in the formative stage, but will probably include the establishment of a body within the Ministry of Interior) the Undersecretariat for Security) to better coordinate counterterrorism efforts, intelligence, and policy. It is expected that in the restructuring, the Jandarma) a force jointly administered by the military and the Ministry of Interior) would be placed fully under civilian control.

¶10. In October 2006, a new law went into effect giving MASAK, Turkey's Financial Crimes Investigation Board, sole responsibility for financial investigation of money laundering and financing of terrorism (ML/FT). In its February 2007 peer review report, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) evaluated Turkish standards to combat ML/FT. Among its major findings was that although the new legislation has been in place only a short time, the number of convictions for money laundering was relatively low, confiscation measures have not yet produced substantial results, and the number of suspicious transaction reports was also relatively low.

¶11. Pursuant to its obligations under UNSCR 1267 and subsequent resolutions, Turkish officials continued to circulate UN and U.S.-designated names of terrorists to all law enforcement and intelligence agencies, and to financial institutions. Only UN-listed names, however, were subjected to asset freezes enforced through a Council of Ministers decree. This legal mechanism for enforcing sanctions under UNSCR 1267 was challenged in Turkish courts by UN-designated terrorist financier Yasin al-Kadi, whose assets had been frozen by the state. Following a series of legal action, the decree freezing his assets has been successfully challenged but is still in effect pending appeal.

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